

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISTANB 02662 201006Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6356

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL IZMIR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISTANBUL 2662

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, TU

OSHSUBJ: LABOR DISPUTE AT ISTANBUL HILTON

1. HILTON INTERNATIONAL VP ANTHONY CLEGG AFD AREA COUNSEL HEINZ BLOCH CALLED ON CONGEN MORNING AUGUST 18 TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE IN SETTLING THREE WEEK OLD LABOR DISPUTE AT ISTANBUL HILTON. HILTON GENMGR VAN DER VLIET HAS RESIGNED. DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR IN CHARGE FEARS VIOLENCE IF THOSE INDIVIDUALS ARE ALLOWED TO RETURN.

2. HILTON HAS LABOR CONTRACT EXPIRING DECEMBER 1975 WITH TURK IS-AFFILIATED UNION OLEY IS. MAJORITY OF WORK FORCE HAS CHANGED AFFILIATION TO DISK-(REVOLUTIONARY TRADE CONFEDERATION) AFFILIATED UNION TURIZM IS AND IS CONDUCTING APPARENTLY ILLEGAL STRIKE. WALK-OUT ORIGINALLY PROVOKED BY HILTON'S REFUSAL, ON ADVICE OF COUNSEL, TO PAY HEATING BONUS, DUE UNDER LABOR CONTRACT, TO DEFECTORS FROM OLEY IS UNION. SUBSEQUENTLY, HILTON WAS ADVISED THAT BONUS SHOULD BE PAID IRRESPECTIVE OF UNION AFFILIATION, WHICH HILTON PREPARED TO DO. OLEY IS DEMANDING THAT TURK IS BE PUNISHED BY DISMISSAL OF SIX LEADERS. ACCORDING TO HILTON INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS, OLEY IS, WHICH CONTINUES TO STAFF HOTEL WITH 225 OF 625 TOTAL LABOR FORCE, INCLUDING KEY TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL PERSONNEL, UNWILLING TO

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PAGE 02 ISTANB 02662 201006Z

COMPROMISE ON THIS POINT.

3. HILTON MANAGEMENT HAS MET ON THREE OCCASIONS WITH GOVERNOR IN PRESENCE OF REGIONAL LABOR DIRECTOR AND CHIEF OF POLICE. ALTHOUGH SYMPATHETIC, GOT OFFICIALS DENIED AUTHORITY IN THE MATTER. HILTON ISSUED NOTICE ON AUG 17 OFFERING TO PAY BONUS AND INVITING ALL EMPLOYEES BACK TO WORK, EXCEPT FOR FIVE OF THE SIX LEADERS, WHO WOULD BE PUT ON PAID LEAVE PENDING OUTCOME OF POLICE INVESTIGATION OF LEGALITY OF STRIKE.

4. HILTON NOW SEES TWO ALTERNATIVES: (A) INFORM STRIKERS THAT THEY WILL BE FIRED IF THEY DO NOT RETURN TO WORK, WHILE PUTTING INSTIGATORS ON SUSPENSION WITH PAY; (B) ATTEMPT TO OUTWAIT STRIKERS AND CONTINUE WITH LIMITED SERVICES IN HOTEL (HOTEL IS APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OCCUPIED). ALTERNATIVE (A) INVOLVES CONVINCING WORKERS TO BREAK WITH UNION LEADERSHIP, WHICH MAY WELL BE IMPOSSIBLE. (NOTE: IF WORKERS ARE FIRED FOR STRIKING ILLEGALLY, THEY LOSE SEVERENCE PAY AMOUNTING TO AS MUCH AS \$15,000 APIECE.) POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENT ACTION BY STRIKERS AND DISK SUPPORTERS WOULD INCREASE CONSIDERABLY, SINCE THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE CLEARED FROM HOTEL GROUNDS BY POLICE. ALTERNATIVE (B) OFFERS NO REAL HOPE FOR IMMEDIATE SOLUTION, AND HILTON MANAGEMENT BELIEVES POSITIVE ACTION MUST BE TAKEN WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS IF SITUATION IS NOT TO DETERIORATE.

5. IN ORDER TO BREAK IMPASSE, HILTON REQUESTS EMBASSY, TO EXTENT POSSIBLE, TO PREVAIL ON LABOR MIN TO ARBITRATE INTER-UNION DISPUTE.
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